2
Bound Beauty
MICK TAKEUCHI

PRINCESS COMICS
[A Princess Gold Publication]

SHIBARIYA KOMACHI

2

TAKEUCHI MICK

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SUMMARY

CHIKO, A HIGH SCHOOL GIRL WHO CAN SEE "RED THREADS," ENDS UP MAKING A CONTRACT WITH ONE OF THE MYSTERIOUSLY POWERFUL "FIVE-COLORED STRINGS," SHIROGANE. IN EXCHANGE FOR BECOMING ITS APPRENTICE, SHE BECAME A CHILD AGAIN. SHE IS FORCED TO JOIN UP WITH A GROUP OF SCOUNDREL SORCERERS, THE MUSUBIYA, AND DEALS WITH INCIDENTS BEYOND THE REALM OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE, BUT...?

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SHIBARIYA KOMACHI
CHAPTER 4
pant
pant
pant
pant

SHIBARIYA
KOMACHI
FOURTH BINDING

SPARKLE
LOVE SURE IS MYSTERIOUS. ♡
THE WORLD LOOKS SO BEAUTIFULLY SPARKLY! ♡
Thanks, love!
Thanks, sun!
Is she an idiot?
There I was trapped by evil spirits
It was yesterday that I fell into a tough situation
I was saved by Shihan at the last second
and he carried me home in his arms
But...
MAGAZINE "NEKO SHOUNEN CHAMPION"

I'M TOO HAPPY, SO MAYBE NOW I WON'T BE ABLE TO LOOK HIM IN THE EYES!♡
Uh-oh!
What'll I do?♥
You've got some wild ideas about him.
DON'T WORRY, HE WON'T BE COMING HOME TODAY. NOT TO MENTION THAT...
HUR
RIED
Mind reader
HHH?
HE WAS CALLED OUT BY HIS GIRLFRIEND.
WHERE D AKE-NII GO?

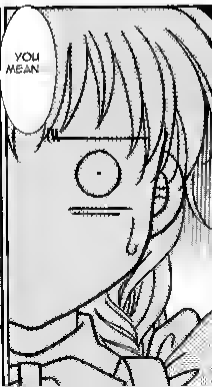
SFX: EHHHHHHH?!
EH?
HE SAID "GIRL-FRIEND"...
S... S... "GIRL-FRIEND"...
I... I forgot!
I forgot that Shihan already had a destined "someone" he was bound to by the red thread!
AH!
WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

APPRENTICES OF THE FIVE-COLORED STRINGS CAN'T SEE ONE ANOTHER OTHER'S BONDS
OH, THE RED THREAD?
I CAN'T SEE IT...
EVEN THOUGH I COULD SEE IT BEFORE...
But there's no mistake that Shihan definitely has someone...
I... I SEE...
DO YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT AKEO-SAN'S "SOMEONE?"
YOU'LL TELL ME?!
SURE.
I wonder what kind of woman she is...
I'm sure she's a beautiful adult woman.

WH-
WHAT ON EARTH IS THIS?
IN EXCHANGE...
nothing good comes from making deals with Ayami...
better not, better not
FOR THE REST OF THE DAY...
YOU'LL BE MY SLAVE
I... I'M NO SLAVE!!
OH, YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW AFTER ALL?

IT'S NOT LIKE I'LL BE MAKING YOU DO ANYTHING ILLEGAL
I'LL JUST HAVE YOU HELP OUT WITH SOME HOUSEWORK
IN OTHER WORDS... ALL HOUSEWORK?

LET'S START WITH SOME *VEEEEERY* LIGHT CLEANING.



とぉあぁぁぁぁ
TAKE THIS!!!
SFX GRRRR
HMM, I WONDER WHAT AKEO-SAN IS DOING RIGHT ABOUT NOW
FINE, I'LL DO IT.
I...
I CAN'T MOVE...
CHOKE
NEXT IS DRYING OUT THE FUTONS
PRUNING THE TREES IN THE GARDEN
I...
I CAN'T REACH
Nice try sneaking up on me
Do this
Do that

WELL, I GUESS I'LL LEAVE THE SHOPPING FOR DINNER TO YOU!
flut
ter
RICE
SOY SAUCE
SUGAR
WHEEZE
WHEEZE
snap
GETTING ANGRY
EXCUSE ME...
I'M GOING TO BUY A REALLY FAT ONE!!
AGGGH, ENOUGH ALREADY! A TUNA OR A YELLOWTAIL,

T-
TUNA?
CAN...
...CAN I HELP YOU?
<...
YOU'RE KUDOU-SAN, RIGHT?
THAT'S RIGHT
!
WE RECEIVED WORD OF THIS JOB FROM ABOVE
WHY DON'T YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR SITU-ATION?

MY LITTLE SISTER HITOMI WAS KILLED
THREE MONTHS AGO...
.....
I'M AWARE OF THE INCIDENT
IT WAS A PRETTY SHOCKING NEWS REPORT, WASN'T IT?
HER BODY WAS DUMPED IN THE RIVER.
IN THE SORRY STATE OF HAVING ALMOST ALL THE BLOOD IN HER BODY DRAINED,
!

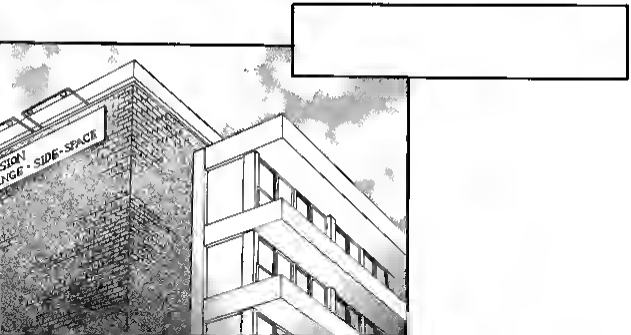
MYSTERIOUS MOON LOSS
MURDER WEAPON
KILLER IS A VAMPIRE
THERE'S BEEN ONE VICTIM A MONTH FOR THREE MONTHS NOW...
OH, THEY HAVEN'T CAUGHT THE GUY YET, HUH
AHH!
THAT INCIDENT EVERYONE'S BEEN SAYING THAT THE KILLER IS A VAMPIRE
HITOMI, SHE...
SHE CAME TO TOKYO ALL ALONE TO PURSUE HER DREAM OF BECOMING A MODEL.
SHE TOOK LESSONS WHILE DOING A PART-TIME JOB
SHE WAS REALLY DOING HER BEST
SHE WAS SO HAPPY TO FINALLY BE SCOUTED BY A MODELING AGENCY...
FOR THINGS TO TURN OUT LIKE THIS...

I WANT YOU
TO FIND HER KILLER
Clutch
THE MAN WHO KILLED MY BELOVED SISTER...
I DEFINITELY CAN'T FORGIVE HIM.
I DEFINITELY CAN'T FORGIVE...
I CAN'T LEAVE IT TO THE POLICE.
I DEFI-NITELY...
...WON'T FORGIVE...

SINCE THERE IS A STRONG NEGATIVE BOND
BETWEEN KILLER AND VICTIM,
WE'VE EVEN RESOLVED INCIDENTS THE POLICE WERE STRUGGLING WITH
MUSUBIYA DEAL WITH INCIDENTS LIKE THESE AS WELL, DON'T WE?
CLINK
IT'S TIMES LIKE THESE THAT OUR POWER'S WORTH IS REQUIRED!
CLENCH
WELL, YOU GUYS WATCH THE HOUSE WHILE I'M GONE
WHY??
re quiet.

WELL YOU GUYS
WE HAVE TO CATCH THE GUY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE OR THERE'LL BE ANOTHER VICTIM!
THAT'S RIGHT!
HITOMI-SAN WAS KILLED THREE MONTHS AGO!
AKE-NII ISN'T HERE
BESIDES ISN'T IT BETTER TO HAVE MORE HELP?
BRATS ARE JUST A BURDEN.
NOTHING YOU TWO WILL BE ABLE TO DO, SO I'M NOT TAKING YOU ALONG.
I'M JUST SAYING THAT THERE'S
IN A SERIOUS INCIDENT LIKE THIS...!!
HEY, IT'S NOT LIKE I'M A KID BECAUSE I LIKE IT!!
I'M NOT A BRAT!!
Although this one sure is!!

THEY MAY JUST GET CUT OFF, WON'T THEY?
...IS FOR THE HEADS OF MEDDLERS THAT DE STUCK INTO SITUATIONS WHERE THEY DON'T BELONG...



NOW,
THEN
SO THIS IS HITOMI-SAN'S ROOM.
WOW, IT'S REALLY DECKED OUT
Was she one of those girls into...?
I SEE. SO YOU DON'T NEED THIS HEAD AFTER ALL...
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO SAY, "YES???"
PULL PULL
I'm a human, after all!

Ugh
DID YOU LEARN HOW TO USE OUJIN IN PLACES WHERE THERE'S NO EARTH, TSUNA?
"HELP?"
7 MAN WITH ☆☆☆ OPPRESSION!!
LUCKY KNIGHT!!
YEAH, COME ON, JUST LET US HELP!
THE BODY WAS FOUND IN THE RIVER
THIS APARTMENT IS FIVE FLOORS ABOVE GROUND
Ughhh
IF YOU TWO ARE LIKE THIS, JUST WHAT HELP DO YOU THINK YOU'LL BE?
AND YOU CAN'T CONTROL SHIROGANE AT ALL UNLESS YOU SUDDENLY FALL INTO THE SITUATION
SIGH
NOT ONCE HAVE I SEEN YOU USE THE FIVE-COLORED STRINGS!
WHIP CRACK
YOU SAY THAT, BUT JUST WHAT CAN YOU DO ANYWAY, AYA-SAN?!
WH-WH-WH-WHAT THE HECK
ACTING ALL HIGH AND MIGHTY

WELL THEN, AS YOU WISH, I'LL SHOW YOU.
SO GO HOME ONCE YOU'VE SEEN IT
OPEN
RUMMAGING
IT'S PROBABLY AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE
!
herplunk
OH, YEAH
PERFUME?

SO IF IT'S SOME WATER THAT A VICTIM CARRIED AROUND,
THERE SHOULD BE AN IMPRESSION MELTED INTO IT.
BY MERGING AND MINGLING, CHARACTERISTICS AND ABILITIES FUSE TOGETHER.
YOU KNOW,
Slowly
WATER HAS THE POWER TO COPY ENERGY.
DRIP
LORD DESTINY...
SPLATTER

...REGRET SINKING INTO AN ABYSS
The perfume is turning black..?
BIND IT TO THE SURFACE OF THE WATER OF THE FIRE GOD.
DR
IP
A BINDING CEREMONY
IS NOW RESPECTFULLY UNDERWAY.

*T/N "BLACK FLOW"

WOOSH
THIS...
IS HITOMI-SAN.
IT'S THE VICTIM'S MEMO-RIES.
I WONDER IF THAT WOMAN IS A SCOUT AS WELL.
AND THEN IT LOOKS LIKE SHE DID A MAGAZINE SHOOT.
SHE WAS SCOUTED.

!?
WAIT...!
THIS PERSON ...!
WATCH OUT...!

YES,
THAT'S ENOUGH
Whoosh
JUST NOW,
THAT WAS THE KILLER!!
WE... WE HAVE TO HURRY AND TELL THE POLICE!
WHAT'LL YOU DO WHEN YOU GET THERE?
THAT'S WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE.
I THINK WE'LL KNOW MORE AFTER WE'VE INVESTIGATED A BIT MORE

"WE DISCOVERED THE KILLER BY HER BOND TO THE VICTIM."
THAT'S NOT EVIDENCE
SO...
SO HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO CATCH THE KILLER?!
I DIDN'T BIND THIS BOND
TO GET HER ARRESTED
THE KILLER...
YOU DON'T MEAN THAT CLIENT?!
SHE'S PLANNING TO TAKE REVENGE?!
DID YOU ACCEPT THIS JOB KNOWING THAT?
IT'S OUR WORK, AFTER ALL

FOLLOWING THE BOND OF FATE
THAT BINDS KILLER TO VICTIM...
...AND BINDS THE CLIENT'S HATRED TO THE KILLER.
WE ONLY BIND
THOSE BONDS WE SHOULD.
AS FOR WHAT TO DO WITH THAT BOND
THAT'S UP TO THE CLIENT.
"I WON'T FORGIVE HIM."
WHETHER IT'S TURNING HER OVER TO THE POLICE,
OR KILLING HER WITH HER OWN HANDS
"I DEFINITELY WON'T FORGIVE HIM!!"

NO WAY, THAT'S NOT RIGHT!!
"ONEE-SAN" WILL BECOME A CRIMINAL HERSELF!
MAYBE SHE DOES HATE THE KILLER SO MUCH
THAT SHE WANTS TO KILL HER, BUT—
THE WAY YOU ONLY WEIGH A STRANGER'S VALUE THE SAME AS YOUR OWN
IS WHAT MAKES YOU A CHILD
*T/N RESPECTFUL WAY TO CALL THE FEMALE CLIENT EARLIER
HITOMI-SAN AND HER SISTER ARE CERTAINLY VICTIMS,
AND IT'S PITIFUL.
BUT JUST BECAUSE A PERSON IS PITIFUL DOESN'T MEAN
THEY'RE REALLY A GOOD PERSON,
AND IT'S NOT LIKE GOOD PEOPLE NEVER COMMIT CRIMES, EITHER

SECRETLY
YOU AND AKEO-SAN,
!
THUMP
YOU'RE TOO TRUSTING
YOU'LL BE BETRAYED.
GETTING ANGRY

SFX: STOP
WHY?
IS THAT THE ONLY WAY YOU THINK??
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S NOT TO BE TRUSTED!!
NOT THIS CLIENT,
BUT YOU, THE SADIST IN GLASSES!!

SFX: CHARGE
AYA-NII,
Standing
DIDN'T I TELL YOU THAT YOU TEASE HER TOO MUCH?
A STRAIGHT-FORWARD KID LIKE THAT, I JUST COULDN'T HELP IT
BECAUSE IT IRRITATES ME.

MENACING ATMOSPHERE
MAYBE I'M BEING STUBBORN, BUT I'LL JUST HAVE TO FIND THE KILLER BEFORE THAT WEEK IN THE CLASSES DOES!!
GEEZ...
DON'T LET IT BOTHER YOU, OK?
UHHH
YES, WE DO
YOU SAY YOU'RE GOING TO FIND HER, BUT WE DON'T HAVE ANY CLUES.
Wow, is this one of those angry victim" situations?
SHARP
YOU SAW IT, DIDN'T YOU? IN HITOMI-SAN'S ROOM.
THE CLUE IS "GOTH LOLI!"
HUH?

AGH,
GEEZ...
I FORGOT MY CELL-PHONE, TOO
IT'S BECAUSE IT'S SUMMER VACATION AND THERE RE SO MANY PEOPLE HERE
RANGE
ECTION
PEOPLE COME HERE ALL DRESSED UP AND GATHER HERE HOPING TO DO A SHOOT
THEY LOOK FOR MODELS IN PLACES LIKE THESE
FOR THE MAGAZINE THAT HITOMI-SAN APPEARED IN,
SO, TSUNA,
THAT S WHY
WE'RE SUDDENLY SEPA-RATED?!

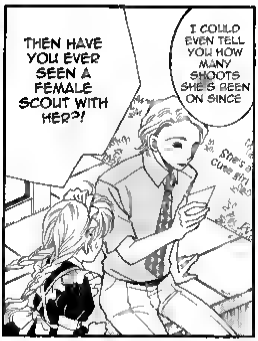
THAT OUTFIT,
DID YOU WEAR IT TO MATCH YOUR MOM?
You see that a lot lately...
the penetrating goth loli
EH?
HEY, HEY, YOU!
YOU ALONE?
These guys...
They think I'm one of the goth loli kids too
ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MODEL?
A scout?!
WE'RE MAKING A VIDEO IN THE STUDIO JUST OVER THERE
If I ask these guys, maybe I can find out something!
WHY DON'T YOU COME WATCH?
I WON'T ALLOW THAT!

HUH?
THIS GIRL'S ALREADY UNDER CONTRACT WITH MY GROUP
Chi
MOVING QUICKLY
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS
?
?
FLABBERGASTED
EVEN IF THEY'RE SCOUTS, THEY'RE JUST CREEPS MAKING THINGS LIKE "H" VIDEOS.
Lately they don't even care if it's a child
THAT'S NOT GOOD YOU KNOW YOU SHOULDN'T GO ALONG WITH GUYS LIKE THOSE

BEEP
WERE YOU ABLE TO GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR BIG BROTHER?
POP
YEP, YEP!
I'LL BE WAITING AT THE INTER-SECTION,
SO COME QUICKLY, OK?
THANK YOU SO MUCH!
YOU SAVED ME
AND YOU EVEN LET ME USE YOUR CELL PHONE
He's a good guy
I even got treated to a crepe
IT'S NO PROBLEM
I COULDN'T LET A KID BE BITTEN LIKE YOU BY A POISON FANG LIKE THAT
Grin
Grin

.....
Shi
I JUST LOVE CUTE KIDS! ♡♡
ne
AH, BUT
NOT IN A CREEPY WAY! ^v
I'M A SCOUT, TOO ^v
OH
I'VE SEEN HER BEFORE
UM,
THEN, DO YOU KNOW THIS PERSON?

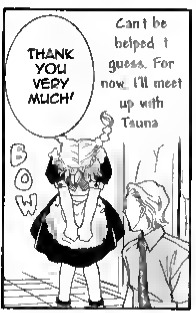
A FEMALE...?
THAT'S RIGHT!
WITH LOOOONG WAVY HAIR LIKE THIS!


I COULD EVEN TELL YOU HOW MANY SHOOTS SHE'S BEEN ON SINCE
THEN HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A FEMALE SCOUT WITH HER?!
She's Gone Sir!

THERE'S A WHOLE BUNCH OF FEMALE SCOUTS, BUT
I DON'T KNOW OF ANYONE LIKE THAT
IS THAT SO...

THERE ARE EVEN RUMORS OF SNUFF FILMS BEING MADE AROUND HERE. SO BE CAREFUL.
!

WATCH OUT FOR GUYS LIKE THE ONES FROM EARLIER


Can't be helped I guess. For now, I'll meet up with Tauna
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
BOW

"Snack Films?"
As in candy?
NO NO.
THIS IS ALL A RUMOR BUT
A SNUFF FILM IS A MOVIE WHERE IT'S NOT ACTING AND THERE ARE SCENES WHERE PEOPLE ARE REALLY KILLED.
THE RUMOR IS THAT THEY'RE BEING MADE UNDERGROUND
IN OTHER WORDS, MURDER VIDEOS
MURDER ...?!
AND THERE ARE BLOODY SCENES AS WELL?!
THAT'S RIGHT, SCARY ISN'T IT?
This ..
...sounds suspicious!

WHERE CAN I FIND THOSE GUYS FROM BEFORE?!
WHAT?!
RUNS OFF
HEY, HEY..!
WAIT A SECOND!!
HE-HEY, WERE YOU EVEN LISTENING JUST NOW?
OH YEAH, AND THEY SAID THERE WAS A STUDIO, TOO!
*UFF
ANYWAY, AT LEAST...
...RETURN MY CELL PHONE!
CAVE HOUSE
ROOM
SHUT

SIGN: INDIAN FOOD
IT'S THAT BUILDING, RIGHT?
THAT'S RIGHT
IT USED TO BE A JAZZ CLUB, BUT IT'S VACANT NOW
SHUT
インド料理
AH, WHAT AM I DOING LEADING YOU HERE?!
ALL RIGHT!
OK, MIYAHARA-SAN,
REDIAL AND TELL MY FRIEND WHERE I AM, PLEASE!
EH?!
EH?!
WAIT JUST A SECOND!
YOU'RE GOING IN THERE ALL ALONE?!
EHHHH?!
RUNS OFF

IF IT USED TO BE A JAZZ CLUB, THE SOUND-PROOFING PROBABLY STILL WORKS.
IT'S AN IDEAL SPOT FOR A MURDER.
Umm

THERE DOES SEEM TO BE EVIDENCE THAT PEOPLE ARE USING IT, BUT
IT'S MOSTLY IN RUINS

End Fourth Binding

FIFTH STRING

SFX: Kyaaaa
?!
A scream--!!
From this room--!!

KYA
waa!
SFX: Shock
SFX: Bang Crash Bang
どがらがっしゃ
AH?
AH
AH...

YOU JUMP INTO CONCLUSIONS AND RUINED ALL OUR EQUIPMENT-
It was a training knife
The blood was just cocoa and honey
OF COURSE WE WEREN'T TAKING A REAL SNUFF VIDEO!!
WE'D GET CAUGHT RIGHT AWAY!!
YOU STUPID!!
NICE!
WE'VE BEEN NEEDING MORE OF THAT LATELY ANYWAY
ALRIGHT, SHE CAN PAY US BACK BY PUTTING ON A SHOW
ahaha-
YO! HANG ON!!
I'M ONLY 17, I CANNOT FILL SUCH NEEDS--!
SFX: Zoom

...
WHERE'D SHE GO TO!?
YAMAIT--
BA-TMP
BA-TMP
ARE THEY GONE?
IT SEEMS LIKE IT
BUT THOSE PEOPLE DIDN'T SEEM TO BE CRIMI-NALS..
YOU SAVED ME, MIYAHARA-SAN
Phew~
CRIMINALS?
OH, UH, UM--NEVER MIND!
ANYWAY WHERE ARE WE--?

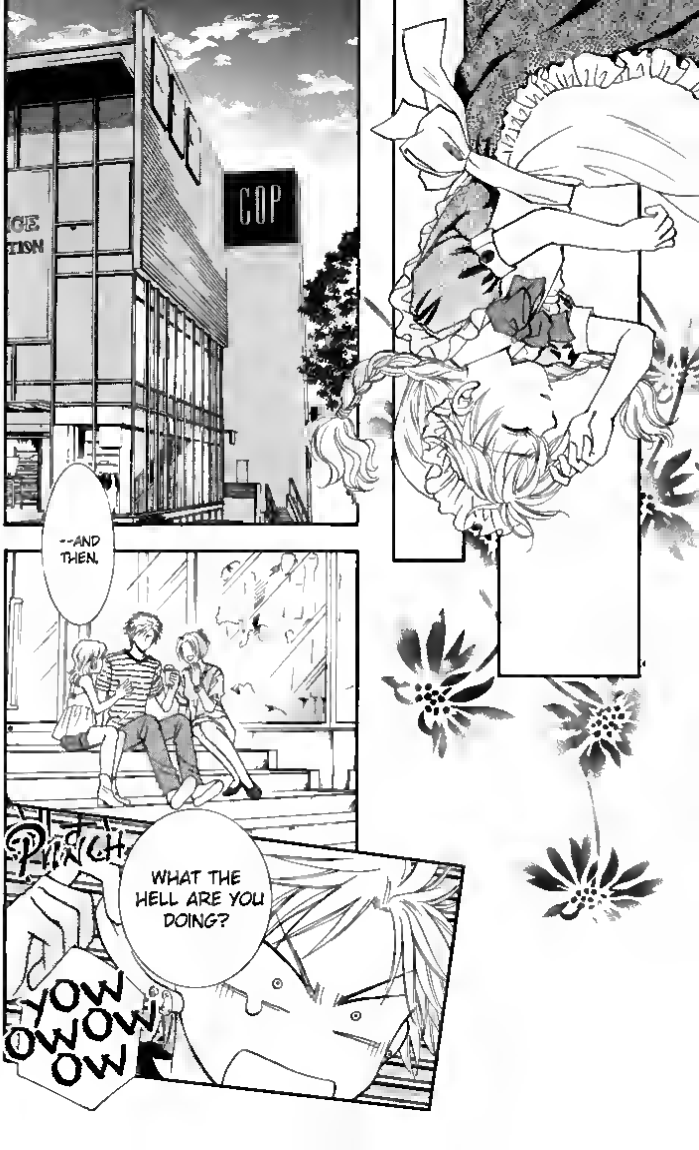
WOW.
I wonder if this was used for photography
OH THIS-
THIS IS AN UN-DER-GROUND STUDIO
suffocating or solemn about the place
But there's something
The air is stagnant
I can smell blood so close it's in my throat
No way this is a fake blood!
Gasp...!
UHGH

Transcendence

This is the scene of a murder.
SFX: Bam
SFX: Bash
NGHAA?!
ARE... ARE YOU OK?
UH...
WHOA...
WHAT'S WITH ALL THE LACE...

THIS COULDN'T BE THE KILLER'S...!?
HERE...!
FLUTTER
--WHICH MEANS THE KILLER DOESN'T HAVE LONG HAIR--
A WIG!?

MI...
WHA...?
SFX: Slam
YAHA
Gugh!


COP
--AND THEN,
PINCH
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?
YOW OWOW OW

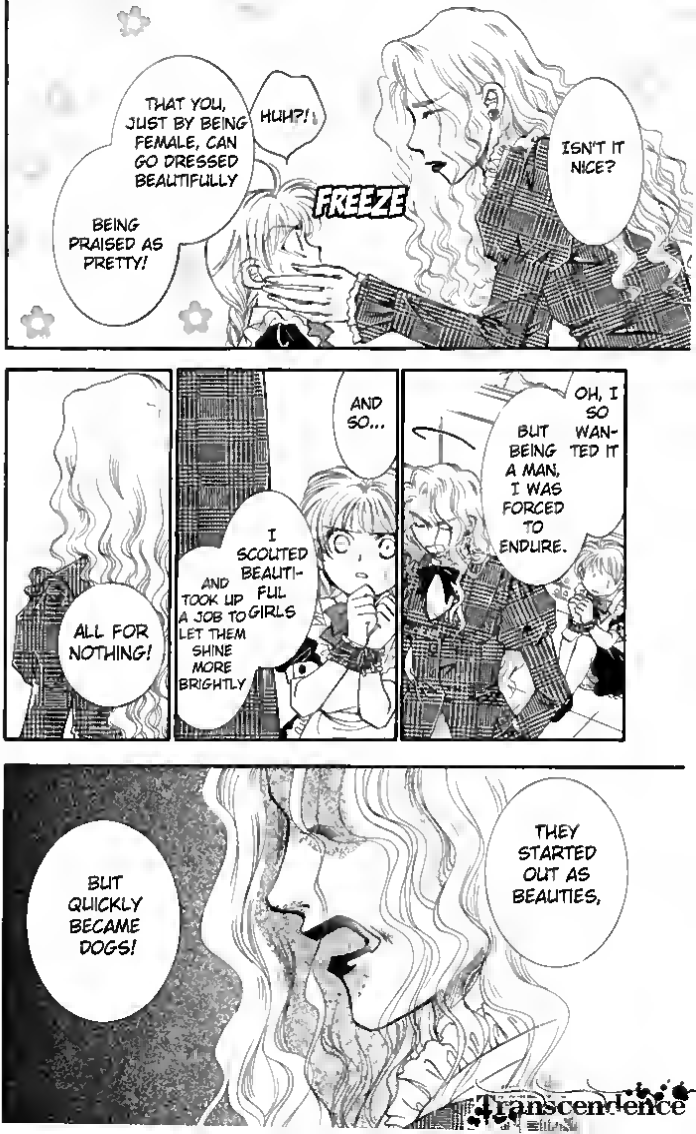
A..AYA-NII!?
WHY ARE YOU HERE!?
DO YOU THINK THAT I DIDN'T KNOW
WHAT YOU GUYS CAN GET UP TO?
I know, right?
Oooh— Is he cute or what?
RE-SEARCH-ING THE OTHER VICTIMS,
I FOUND OUT THAT THE FIRST GIRL WHO GOT KILLED WAS SCOUTED HERE.
THE SECOND ONE IS STILL UNKNOWN,
BUT THEY SAY SHE WAS AN ATTRACTIVE GIRL
ISN'T IT ODD THAT THEY WOULD BOTH BE CALLED HERE?
ALSO,
AT THE MODELING AGENCY WHERE THE FIRST GIRL WAS SCOUTED,
THERE WAS AN EMPLOYEE WHO HAD RECENTLY QUIT.
WAS IT A LONG-HAIRED WOMAN?
NO, A MAN
Transcendence

SUPPOSEDLY THIS ORDINARY MALE EMPLOYEE ..
HAD SOME VERY STRANGE HOBBIES.....
--SPEAKING OF WHICH,
WHERE'S OUR GIRL?
HOW WOULD I KNOW
SHE PHONED US TO WAIT AT THE INTERSECTION, SO
WE'VE BEEN WAITING HERE THE WHOLE TIME
So you thought you'd mix up some drinks?
They were the ones she ordered with me.
KNOWING HER,
SHE'S PROBABLY GOTTEN HERSELF INTO TROUBLE AGAIN
...

NO WAY--!
hahaha
UH...
YOU'RE AWAKE?

Bwa!
!!
WHAT...
WHAT'S GOING ON?
THAT...
OUTFIT...
MIYAHARA-SAN...!

PERHAPS YOU DO NOT WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR OWN FEAR?
IN A MAGNIFICENT SHOW OF FORCE, YOU'VE REACHED THE HEART OF THE MATTER. NOT VERY CONSIDERATE OF YOU.
OR RATHER--
SLIDE
HIC...
THE... THE KILLER IS...
MIYAHARA-SAN!?
WHA... WHY!?


THAT YOU, JUST BY BEING FEMALE, CAN GO DRESSED BEAUTIFULLY
HUH?!
FREEZE
ISN'T IT NICE?
BEING PRAISED AS PRETTY!
OH, I SO WANTED IT
BUT BEING A MAN, I WAS FORCED TO ENDURE.
AND SO...
I SCOUTED BEAUTIFUL GIRLS
AND TOOK UP A JOB TO LET THEM SHINE MORE BRIGHTLY
ALL FOR NOTHING!
THEY STARTED OUT AS BEAUTIES,
BUT QUICKLY BECAME DOGS!

What!? That outfit!!
A crossdresser!? Nasty!
AND WHAT'S MORE--
WHEN I SCOUTED GIRLS,
I FOUND TRULY PURE BEAUTIES.
BUT THEY WERE SOON DIRTIED BY THAT WORLD.

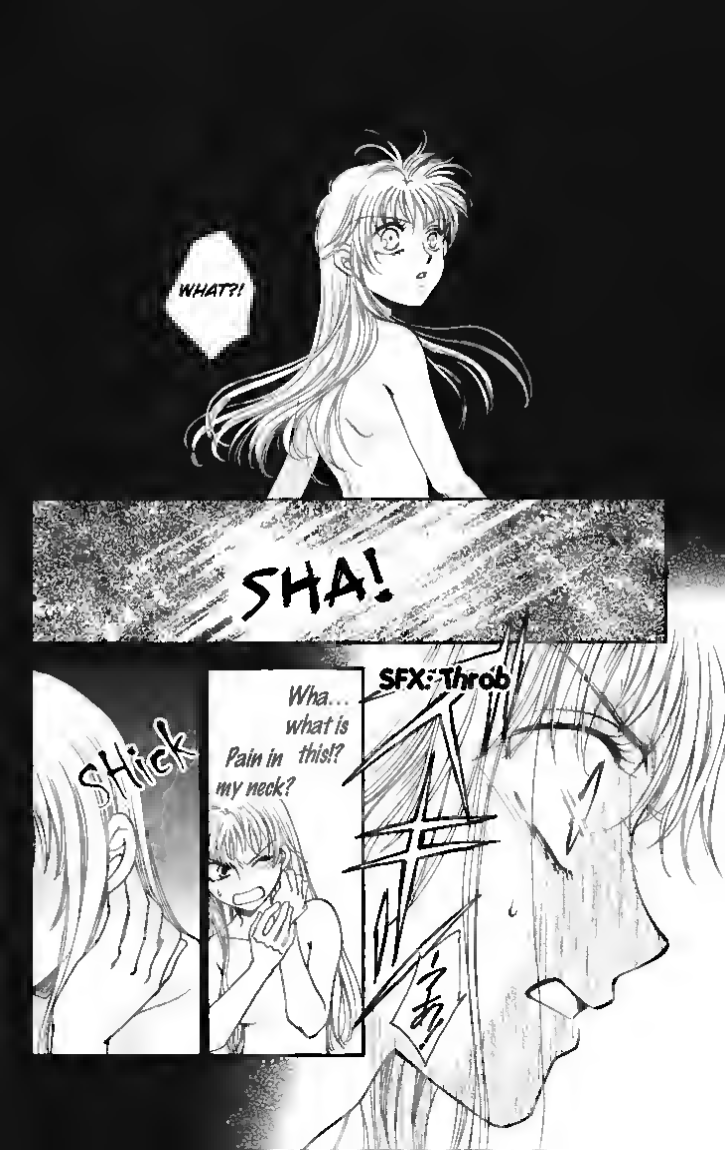
THEIR BEAUTY...
I LET THEM LIVE WITHIN ME
I TOOK THEM BEFORE THEY COULD BECOME UGLY.
SO, I

SFX: GASP!
YOU SEE,
I PRESERVE THEIR YOUTHFUL BEAUTY.
Blood!?
I DRINK A BIT EVERY DAY, YOU KNOW
This is bad.
I ONLY LURED YOU HERE TO SEAL YOUR LIPS, BUT,
SINCE YOU'RE SUCH A CUTIE, MAYBE I'LL PRESERVE YOU AS WELL.
I'll...I'll pass--!!
He's totally lost it!!
THAT WAY I CAN BECOME MORE BEAUTIFUL, NO?
This is really, really bad.
This guy's seriously scary...

SFX: GWOO!
EH?
SHA
SHIZO
WAAAH!
SFX: BAM
Why wouldn't I--!!
WHY DO YOU CRINGE?
OH MY!

I'll have to do something!!
Something...?
SIL...
SILVER...
THREAD!
Sling

!?
Hah?


WHAT?!
SHA!
SFX: Throb
Wha… what is this!?
Pain in my neck?
sHick

I...
I'm!
DEAD?!
Gaah!
Shibaitsuka Konzachi
THANK YOU FOR READING
END

This is Hitomi-san's memory!
No I'm not...

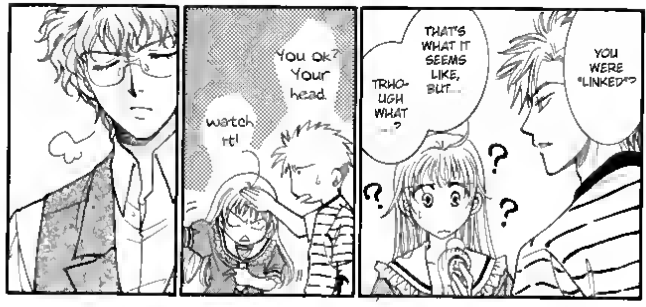
BA-BUMP
Uwah!!
Why tie my fate with this girl when I'm stuck with her killer!!
STUPID SILVER THREAD!
IT HURTS!

Blood!

My god it hurts...
Ahh! Ouww!
No! I'm scared
I'm so scared
...
Something's...
Shining?
So scared...

SLAP
What...
What is it?
Huh?

AYA-SAN!?
Getting ready for another
Oh, you're awake
YOU REALLY ARE SKILLED AT GETTING INTO A BAD PINCH, AREN'T YOU?
Ouch! owow
YOU HAVE AN AMAZING TALENT
what are you doing?
WHEN I WENT AFTER HIM, THE KILLER CORNERED ME.
TSUNA?!
Le beau monde
THIS..
OH... MIYAHARA-SAN'S CLOTHES?
Just now, I


You ok? Your head.
watch it!
YOU WERE "LINKED"?
THAT'S WHAT IT SEEMS LIKE, BUT...
THROUGH WHAT...?

FOR SUCH SIMPLE MINDS AS CHICO AND TSUNA,
IT'S VERY DANGEROUS
SFX: You lumped us together?!

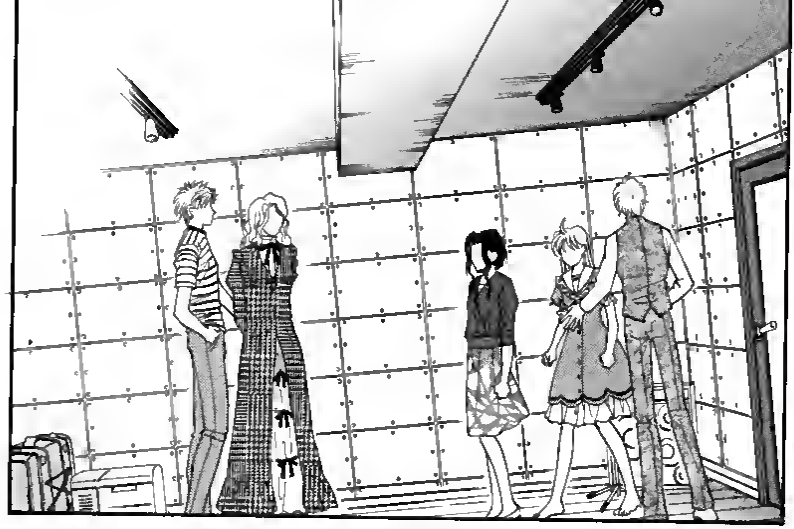
SUCH A BLOODY SCENE LIKE THIS
DOES NOT HAVE A DECENT MENTAL CONDITION FOR THE KILLER OR THE VICTIM
IF YOU LINK YOUR FATES HERE, THE OTHER'S MEMORIES AND EMOTIONS WILL TRANSMIT DIRECTLY
SO YOUR MENTALITIES ARE TUNED TO THEIR UTMOST LIMITS

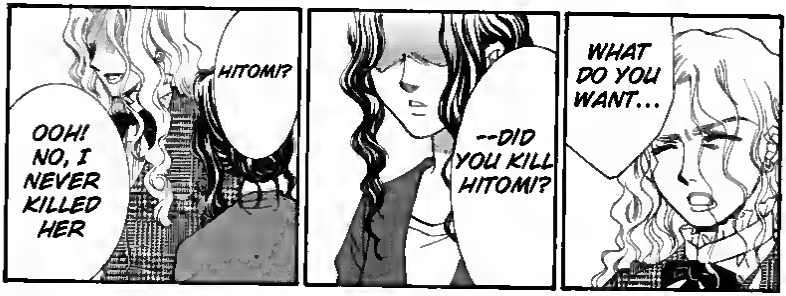
I... I DID FEEL LIKE...
I WAS GOING INTO SOMETHING BAD—

BUT IT WOULD BE JUST AS DANGEROUS FOR YOU, AYA-SAN...
I HAVE NO PROB-LEM
BECAUSE I HAVE LOST
A FEELING HEART.
MY HEART DOES NOT FEEL, NO MATTER HOW HORRIBLE THE SITUATION MAY BE.
I HAVE NO INTEREST IN EITHER AFFECTION OR HATRED.

LOST...
HIS HEART--
THAT IS THE PRICE TO PAY FOR THE "S-COLORED STRING", THE BLACK STREAM
WHAT... WHY?
IT'S A SECRET.
BUT LITERALLY I CAN'T BE MOVED BY EMOTIONS
BUT IT WORKS TO MY ADVANTAGE YOU SEE?
MY JUDGMENT IS NEVER CLOUDED, AND I HAVE NO GUILTY CONSCIENCE
THEREFORE COMPARED TO YOU
I CAN LOOK AT THE WORLD MORE CALMLY
!
I LEAVE THE REST TO YOU--
SFX: Creak

KUDOU-SAN!
YOU CALLED FOR HER?
THAT IS YOUR "JOB", ISN'T IT?
TMP
TMP
TMP
BUT...!
SLIDE




WHAT DO YOU WANT...
--DID YOU KILL HITOMI?
HITOMI?
OOH! NO, I NEVER KILLED HER

I SAVED HER FROM BEING DIRTIED BY THIS WORLD.
SO THAT WITHIN ME SHE MAY BE
FOR-EVER BEAUTI-FUL.

THIS IS FOR HITOMI!
WHA... WHAT ARE YOU DOING!
SFX: SHA
KYAA!
SFX: BAM
STOP IT!
NOO!
SFX: SHA!

This isn't the world that Hitomi-san would have wanted...!!
I hate this.
o-nee-san's feelings,
can't be helped, but...

Le beau monde
The world that
Hitomi-san wanted--?
I'LL
KILL YOUU!!
Sha

CHICO!?
SLIDE
HITOMI...?
PLEASE THINK ABOUT HOW HITOMI-SAN FEELS!
BEFORE YOU LAY A HAND ON THIS CRIMINAL,
GET OUT OF MY WAY!!
I'M NOT IN THE WAY.
THIS...!
THIS IS--

This!
Perfect for celebrating you living on your own!!
HITOMI AND I WENT SHOPPING TOGETHER--
Not the scent?
I love the name!
Oh, come on!!
THE PERFUME I GAVE HER...
I READ ABOUT IT IN A MAGAZINE!
THIS PERFUME IS SUPPOSED TO MAKE YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE.
OF COURSE IT'S ONLY AN ADVERTISING JINGLE, BUT,
THE NAME IS--
Le beau monde

IT MEANS "BEAUTIFUL WORLD" IN FRENCH
HITOMI-SAN LOVED PRETTY THINGS, AND
SHE WANTED TO BE PRETTY HERSELF.
SHE HAD BEAUTIFUL DREAMS FOR THIS WORLD.
THOSE DREAMS WERE CRUELLY VIOLATED, BUT

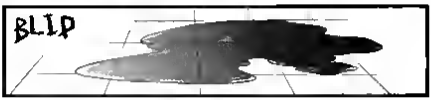
SHE WANTED HER DEAR SISTER
TO STAY IN THIS "BEAUTIFUL WORLD"--
THAT'S WHAT I BELIEVE.
CLATTER
HITOMI ?
FWOOSH
FWA
HITO
MI...

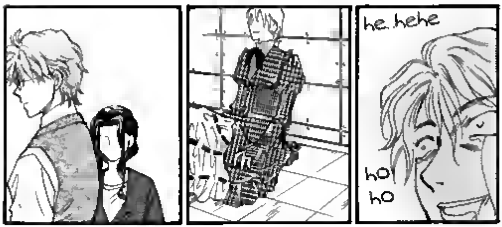
YOU PEOPLE...
!
I told you to keep an eye out!
sorry, man
NOW WHAT?

Swap
BLACK STREAM
WE HAVE NO TIME TO WASTE ARGUING WITH THIS SCUM
YOU F***ING ...!
YOU'RE JEALOUS OF MY BEAUTY?
I GET IT NOW
SFX: FWING
!?
WHAT IS THIS STRING!?
WHA... WHAT THE!?
SFX: DRIP

TO THE GRUDGE OF THE PERSON MURDERED
AN UNBREAK-ABLE CURSED STRING
WHA...! WHAT IS THIS!!
!?
SFX: Glop
Glob
WHAT DID YOU DO!
IT'S A LITTLE LINK OF FATE

OOOO
NOOO


BLIP


he. hehe
ho
ho

I'M SORRY.
FOR..
CALLING YOU A BEAST.
YOU DIDN'T WANT TSUNA OR I TO BE HORRIFIED FROM THOSE BRUTAL ACTS,
OR GET HURT.
YOU PROTECTED ALL OF US.
YOU DO HAVE FEELINGS.
AH...
After all I am literally inhuman
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT IT'S NOT LIKE YOU COULD HURT MY FEELINGS
BUT I THINK I COULD HAVE!

THAT'S WHY I THINK...
YOU ARE A KIND PERSON...
!
I WAS JUST TRYING TO AVOID MORE TROUBLE
Positively
TOTAL EGO
Even being irritated
since I obtained the "5-Color String"
Although it is only
that I have been moved this deeply

Besides that--
IT'S TRUE, ISN'T IT...
...
BUT I LOOK AT CHICO-CHAN AND,
I JUST WANT TO BULLY HER SO MUCH!
SFX: Aching of be Mean
That's right, we've still got a working slave contract, huh?
You actually are a beast!!

SFX: BASH
OY... THIS WAS THE STONE PILLAR SCHEDULED FOR REMOVAL, RIGHT?
HAH?
A PILLAR IS A PILLAR, RIGHT?
Ah-ah-a...
YEAH, I GUESS...
Seth Seng

Sixth String

WE'RE HEADING OUT TO WORK.
SO...
Cold Compress
GULULU-HHH~~
GLOOM

YOU'RE GETTING IT NEXT, TSUNA!
GRR
AND YOU SAID YOU WOULDN'T GET SICK!
HK
I TOLD YOU THE WHITE THREAD HAD SIDE EFFECTS.
ADD ALL THE PROWLING AROUND HALLWAYS LATE AT NIGHT AND ANYONE WOULD CATCH A COLD!
HACK!

But Shihan still didn't come back.

DO-ON

that after I spin the White Thread I always fall apart

I still went to the door many times last night ...

Flash
...BUT IT STILL FREAKS ME OUT--!
GAAH
WELL, EVEN SHIHAN MUST SPEND THE NIGHT AT A GIRLFRIEND'S PLACE ONCE IN A WHILE...
Trudge
I HAVE NO RIGHT TO COMPLAIN...
Trudge
It's that White Thread!
Whatever's rampaging around my body...
probably isn't a virus.
It's a godlike power
and very precious.
BUT THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING,
I WONDER IF I SHOULD HOLD ONTO IT...
Then give it back.
HUH?

SFX; SHOOM
Shihan!?

!!
BBBLOP
Ack
Something's burning!?
He can't!!
NO
My body is burning up...
NOOOOOO
burning...
it stinks...
I can't die like this. The smell of flesh...
No!
If he takes the White Thread back, won't I die!?
SHIT
FWUMP
Transcendence

YOU COULD HURT YOURSELF, WAKING UP AS SUDDENLY AS THAT!
WHA?
YOU WERE COLLAPSED ON THE DOORSTEP
!?
HERE YOU GO!
AND ON TOP OF THAT!
LEAVING A SICK GIRL ON HER OWN,
AYA-SAN AND HIROTSUNA-SAN ARE SO IRRESPONSIBLE...
Wait a second
Who's this gorgeous lady!?
IT'S A MEDICINAL SOUP I PREPARED
DRINK UP, NOW.
What is this smell?

BOW DOWN
OH SORRY, I'M CHIYACO GOTOH
WAAH!
FORGIVE THIS LATE INTRODUCTION, MY NAME IS ISORA SAKURAGI
EH?
UHM, WELL...
OH MY!
HUH?
AKEO-SAN HAS STILL NOT RETURNED?
HOW DO YOU KNOW MU-SUBIYA...
BUT
YES
WITH SHIHAN?
WAIT
WA-WA-WA-
This morning!?
HOW ODD...
WE LEFT AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME THIS MORNING...
A-SUH??
No...way.
This woman is—
YESTERDAY YOU WERE WITH...??
SO SO... SO YOU MEAN
YESTER-DAY—

But it...but she, she's, she's like...
Shihan's lover--!?
...WITH YOUR SHIHAN.
This Japanese beauty, and she's nice, and so composed!
Smiley
Smiley
She's like the ideal woman!!
They're perfect for each other!!

CONCERT HALL?
JUST ARRIVING AT THE CONCERT HALL
RIGHT ABOUT NOW AKEO-SAN SHOULD BE
OH, MY!
IT'S ALMOST TIME.
WE'RE ATTENDING A CONCERT.
And they have a date today!!
ARGH!
OH...
I WISH I COULD GO TOO...
heehee
BUT YOUR CONDITION...
GULP GULP
I'M ALL BETTER NOW!
You're about to cry
THAT'S SOME QUICK-ACTING MEDICINE YOU'VE GOT!

YAY!
I SUPPOSE IT'S SETTLED THEN...
I have to be on the alert...
If I was stuck here worrying about them, my sickness would just get worse.
and see what their relationship is really like!!

THIS HOTEL...
...IS A VERY OLD AND REVERED WORLD-CLASS HOTEL...
High-society stuff
AYA-SAN!?
SO NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
WHAT THE...?
CHICO-CHAN?
Urk
IGORA-CHAN CAME TOO?
WHY ARE THEY HERE?
WELL, YOU SEE...

Grand Royal Hotel
The Beauty of the Japanese Harp~
Isora Fukuragi Solo in Concert
ISORA-CHAN IS ACTUALLY...
A GENIUS SOLOIST IN THE WORLD OF JAPANESE HARP-PLAYING-
SHE'S DONE CONCERTS OVERSEAS, AND EVEN RELEASED A CD!
SHE HAS AN AMAZING TALENT.
Probably because
SHE'S ALSO THE DAUGHTER OF ONE OF THE FAMOUS KYOTO MASTERS.
THEN THAT MEANS—
Rehearsal

I'm nothing compared to her--!!
I COULDN'T EVEN STEP INTO THE SAME RING AS HER
I'm practically a kid...
Always bugging people..
Not only is she beautiful and nice,
she's also this maiden genius!
Is she even human!?
EH? ♡
AH! AKEO-SAN!
SHI--
Huh?
SHIHAN!!

shff
tmptmptmp
...
AKEO-SAN!
...

WHEN YOU CALLED, I PERSONALLY CAME AS SOON AS I COULD...
IT'S ABOUT THE WHITE THREAD, I EXPECT?
HOW WAS IT, VISITING HOME AGAIN?
WHAT IS THE FAMILY'S PLAN FOR CHICO-CHAN, I WONDER...?

VROOOM
WAAH
SFX: CRASH
tmptmptmp
SFX: GRAB
EH?!
patmp tmp
OWIIE
SOR-RY~
up we GO!!

I KNOW...
I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO GO TO BED!
TSUNA!
AREN'T YOU GOING TO THE CONCERT?
That highbrow stuff isn't my thing.
I DIDN'T COME HERE TO LISTEN TO SOME TINKLEY HARP MUSIC!
THAT'S RIGHT! WHAT ABOUT WORK?
ARE YOU ALL DONE?
NO.
NOT YET.

THIS PLACE HAS BEEN HAUNTED FOR A WHILE.
IT'S SOME SORT OF HOTSPOT OF SPIRIT ENERGY.
APPARENTLY IT'S BECAUSE THE OLD OWNER OF THE PLACE PUT HIS LIFE INTO CREATING A HOTEL CHAIN
AND SO HE NEVER LEFT THE GROUNDS
BUT THE CURRENT OWNER IS A VERY PRACTICAL MAN.
SO THE MANAGEMENT STARTED SOME RENOVATION PROJECTS,
AND SOME CONSTRUCTION GUYS TORE DOWN THE PILLAR... IT STARTED ALL OF THIS
EVER SINCE THEN, THERE HAVE BEEN COUNTLESS ACCIDENTS AT THE CONSTRUCTION SITE
SO MANY JOBS FOR MUSUBIYA
AND THE HOTEL GUESTS ARE SAYING THAT THEY'VE SEEN GHOSTS... AND...
THEY'RE SAYING
IT GOES HAND-IN-HAND WITH OLD SPIRITS
AND AYA SAYS THAT CHANGING THINGS SO CARELESSLY LIKE THAT IS DANGEROUS!

--AND I GET TO GUARD THE SPIRIT BARRIER!
Ah-
hem
SHUT UP!
SO YOU'RE THEIR LACKEY.
Vroom
RIGHT NOW
THE ONLY THING CLOSED OFF IS THE POND.

The fact that I'm able to set foot in this situation...
I suddenly feel like I don't belong here...
is all because of Shihan, isn't it...?
Transcendence
If I'm in the air right now...
Where will I land...?

AYA!
AKEO IS HERE, TOO!
TSUNA!
CHICO-CHAN!
AH!
Isora-san...
WE'LL BE SPINNING A STRING FASTER THAN WE THOUGHT!
AKEO-SAN SAID HE WOULD HELP, TOO
NOT A SOUL ESCAPED MY VIGILANCE—
Ahem
SFX VROOM
YOU KEPT WATCH, DIDN'T YOU? TSUNA...
TOTALLY!

Grab
YOU CAN'T COME IN HERE...!
Wa a h!
Vroom
Gwah
shhp
EH?
snap
YOU STUPID...!! YOU BROKE THE BARRIER!!
Spa-
A A A A!
loosh

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING—?
sloshh
pond-water
I COULDN'T HELP IT!
IT WAS AN ACCI-DENT—
CHIYACO!!
SFX: SWISH
SFX: ZSSH

THEY...
THEY REALLY...
FEED THEIR FISH WELL AT A WORLD-CLASS HOTEL...

SFX: VOOSH
SFX: GWAAH
KYAAH!
AYA
IT'S A BEAUTIFUL SPECIMEN, TOO BAD WE CAN'T EAT IT.
Ohh, too bad
Aah, THE PENT UP SPIRIT TOOK THE FORM OF A CARP!
Gyaah!
Waah!
Waah!
Waah!
!!
THE LITTLE BOY!
WATCH OUT!!
SFX: ROAR
Transcendence

WHITE THREAD!
SHINNING
Not again!
Oh no!

I'll give it to you anyway
TSUNA!
YOU'RE SHIRTLESS!
DO I HAVE TO BE YOUR CHANGE OF CLOTHES?!
!
CHI-YACO!
STOP!
SHIHAN...

This is the only way...
I can't screw up in front of Shihan anymore.
DON'T WORRY--!
Woo!

I can win against her--!!
SFX: GRAH!
SFX: KWIP
CRUMBLE

KYAAAH!
HAH!?
SFX: FWING
FLOP
FWOOP
There's more!
THEY WERE ORIGINALLY A BUNCH OF SPIRITS STUCK TOGETHER, SO...
FWOP
FLOP
WHAT? WHAT?
WHAT'S GOING ON~~~
!?
SFX: HSS!

SFX: VWIP!

SHI... SHI-HAN, YOUR ARM...!
IT'S NOTHING.
LEAVE, NOW!
YES, SIR.
SHH
OH...
THANK YOU, ISORA-SAN.

WHAT A SHAMEFUL DISPLAY.

HOW-EVER...
DEPENDING PURELY ON STRENGTH IS NOTHING BUT AN ACT OF VIOLENCE.
A CHILD'S TANTRUM.
UM?
EXCUSE ME?
FOR AN AMATEUR WITH NO TRAINING TO SPIN THE WHITE THREAD...
YOU MUST HAVE GREAT NATURAL SKILL.
WHAT?!
rustle
The wind...
How? Just now
Huh!?

DID YOU KNOW...
SHAA...
THAT THE JAPANESE HARP ORIGINATED FROM THE SOUND OF A BOWSTRING?
THEY SAY THAT THE POWER TO EXORCISE DEMONS RESIDES IN THE SOUND OF A BOWSTRING BEING PULLED
SHAA...
SHAA...
The wind...
is circling around Isora-san...!?

It's a... different string!

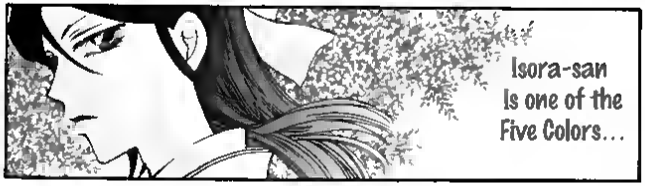
It's blue...

A Five-Colored String!!

The trees too...
They're whispering with the sound of the harp...
Bii
ii
ing...
Shi
ing...
IS THAT...
THE SOUND OF A HARP!?
YOUR SLEEP HAS BEEN DISTURBED, O MANY SPIRITS!
THE SOUND OF THE WIND GUIDES YOU FORWARD TO THE GRACE OF THE ANCIENT ONE AND YOUR DESTINIES!
BE STILL, O SPIRITS, ONCE MORE!
Vi
ing

MAY YOUR DESTINIES...
INTERTWINE!

sha
sha
sha
sha
HUSSHH
The spirits are returning to the broken pillar...



The string of wood...

"Blue Storm"...

I ACTUALLY... DIDN'T COME HERE TO PERFORM.
I WAS TOLD TO TAKE MS. CHIYACO OUT, IN PERSON, TO THE MAIN HOUSE.
SHE'S BEING RESPECTFUL DUM-DUM!
TAKE ME OUT? LIKE, OUT TO A LATE-NIGHT PARTY?
BUT IT WAS AKEO-SAN WHO ORIGINALLY TOLD HER TO DO THAT
WHAT?!
HA... HUH?!
SHE WASN'T ON A DATE WITH ISORA-SAN YESTER..?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
BUT... BUT, AYA-SAN SAID SOMETHING ABOUT A "GIRLFRIEND"...
Transcendence

I don't believe this guy...
Urk
AND SHE IS A FRIEND...
Thus, "Girl friend"
WELL, SHE IS A GIRL...
HOW-EVER!
BUT AS A MEMBER OF THE FIVE COLORS, I DO NOT APPROVE
I DON'T KNOW WHY AKEO-SAN WOULD WISH TO PROTECT THIS GIRL.
I DO NOT BELIEVE IT WAS NECESSARY FOR ALL OF YOU TO COME HERE.

YOU MUST RETURN THE WHITE THREAD IMMEDIATELY!
EH?
Whaaat !?

Seventh Binding
縛りの深(しん)
Transcendence

YOU WANT TO TAKE SHIROGANE AWAY FROM ME...?
THE FIVE COLORED THREADS BIND THEMSELVES TO THE WIELDER'S SOUL.
THEN YOU...
...MEAN...
...YOU DON'T CARE IF I DIE?

BLUNT
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE!?
WHA...!?
CLATTER
I'M JUST JOKING.
PRECISELY.
Iori-chan never sounds like she's joking.
Whoa, little lady.
Gimme a hand here! She's dead!!
MORE ACCURATELY...
I'M NOT ASKING TO TAKE IT BACK...
...SO MUCH AS TO SEAL IT.

A PACT WITH ONE OF THE FIVE COLORED THREADS CANNOT BE ABSOLVED UNTIL THE SPINNER DIES.
I ONLY WISH TO SEAL SHIROGANE'S POWER.
OH, I SEE.
WHAT!? JUST SHIRO-GANE!?
THEN WHAT ABOUT ME!?
THADUMP
SORRY, BUT YOU'LL STAY JUST THE SAME.
PT!
YOU WON'T HAVE ANY SPECIAL POWERS ANYMORE.
JUST YOUR EVERYDAY, ORDINARY KID.
THADUMP
THADUMP
I WON'T HAVE...

A LITTLE!!
YOU'RE DIS-PLEASED ?
THAT'S NOT FAIR!
I WON'T LET YOU DO IT!
...MY SPECIAL POWERS ANYMORE?
YOU CAN SHOVE THAT IDEA IN YOUR EAR!!
Hmph...
Boo!
Boo!
I SUPPOSE THERE'S NO WAY AROUND IT...
LIFT
VERY WELL.

KNOT
HUH?
WHIP
WHIP
ONE, TWO, THREE, SHOOT!
ACK!
HUH?
WRAP
WRAP
SEIRAN, GO!
AH...
AAAH!!
TUG
TUG
WHAT IS THIS THING!?
IT WON'T UNDO!!
YOU'RE KIDDING ME...
I CAN'T USE SHIROGANE NOW?
IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, GO AHEAD AND TRY.
SHOCK
FASTENING A KNOT DOESN'T REQUIRE AN OFFICIAL TYING.
THIS IS ALL IT TAKES TO CREATE A SEAL.

THIS WOMAN IS UNBELIEVABLE!!
OH, THAT'S RIGHT...
YOU DON'T HAVE ENOUGH CONTROL OVER IT TO CALL IT OUT BY WILL.
I HAVE A PROBLEM WITH ALL DISOBEDIENT CHILDREN.
DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH ME OR SOMETHING!?
You always put me down!
YOU, YOU PIP-SQUEAK!
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR WHINING!!
Give me a break...
What an earache...
WHO ARE YOU CALLING A CHILD!?
TODAY'S INCIDENT...
...AT THE HOTEL SHOWED IT ALL TOO CLEARLY.
YOU'RE RECK-LESS, CARE-LESS ...
...AND IGNO-RANT.

THE FIVE COLORED THREADS ARE SACRED TREASURES THAT DEMONSTRATE STRONG SPIRITUAL POWER.
THEY'RE NOT TOYS FOR LITTLE KIDS TO PLAY WITH.
...THE SAME WAY MY FATHER DID.
.....
SHE'S TEARING ME DOWN...
YOU ONLY ACTIVATE SHIROGANE BY GETTING EMOTIONAL.
THERE'S NOT ONE IOTA OF JUDGMENT IN YOUR TINY HEAD.
...HE LOOKED DOWN ON ME AND JUDGED ME SO CRUELLY.
...AND PRACTICALITY...
LECTURING ME ABOUT COMMON SENSE...
...IT'S DANGEROUS TO BE IN POSSESSION OF SHIROGANE.
FOR A MERE CHILD LIKE YOU...
CHILDREN SHOULD BE SEEN AND NOT HEARD!!

...HAVEN'T YOU EXPERIENCED SIGNS OF YOUR BODY REJECTING IT?
GULP
BESIDES ...
Anyone could see right through that.
UH... WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
YOUR BODY'S NOT SUITED TO HANDLE SHIROGANE. IF YOU CONTINUE TO USE IT...
...YOU'LL CAUSE IRREVOCABLE DAMAGE TO YOURSELF!
.....

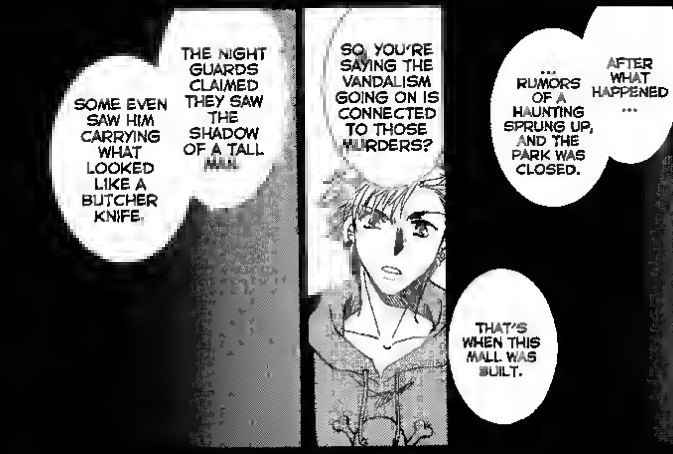
ABSO-LUTELY!
I HOPE THAT'S ALL RIGHT?
...I'LL BE STAYING HERE WITH YOU FOR THE NEXT FEW NIGHTS.
THAT'S WHY...
...AND PROVIDE THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY WITH A REPORT.
...I'D LIKE TO OBSERVE YOU ALL ON THE JOB...
AND WHILE I'M HERE...
Just what I need...
Uh-oh
SHIRO-GANE...
AM I...
SHE WASN'T KIDDING.
I CAN'T FEEL IT'S PRESENCE ANYMORE.

WOOOOW!
...DOOMED TO BECOME...
...AN EVERYDAY, ORDINARY GIRL?
DAISO
THIS MALL'S ENORMOUS!
IT'S THE GIANT MULTIPLEX EVERYONE'S BEEN TALKING ABOUT.
It's got eateries, a cinema, and a gym.
IT'S SCHEDULED TO OPEN IN A WEEK.

DID YOU SAY POLTERGEIST!?
THAT'S RIGHT...
EVERY DAY, IT'S SOMETHING NEW.
SHOP WINDOWS BEING BROKEN, MACHINES RUNNING AMOK...
DO YOU...
...HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT'S CAUSING IT?
YES, WE DO...

THERE USED TO BE A PARK ON THIS PROPERTY.
IT WAS SMALL, BUT STILL HAD RIDES AND SUCH.
.....
ONE OF THE PARK KEEPERS ...
...KILLED SOME OF THE CHILDREN WHO PLAYED HERE.
MURDERS !?
AAAH!
NOT SO LOUD!!
IT WAS ALSO THE SITE OF...
...A STRING OF GORY MURDERS

THE MURDERER SET HIS HOUSE...
...AND HIMSELF ON FIRE.
WHEN THEY SEARCHED THE CHARRED REMAINS OF HIS HOME ...
...THE BODIES OF THE CHILDREN WERE UN-COVERED.
HOW HORRID ...
AH, YES. I REMEMBER THAT STORY.


AFTER WHAT HAPPENED ...
... RUMORS OF A HAUNTING SPRUNG UP, AND THE PARK WAS CLOSED.
SO, YOU'RE SAYING THE VANDALISM GOING ON IS CONNECTED TO THOSE MURDERS?
THAT'S WHEN THIS MALL WAS BUILT.
THE NIGHT GUARDS CLAIMED THEY SAW THE SHADOW OF A TALL MAN.
SOME EVEN SAW HIM CARRYING WHAT LOOKED LIKE A BUTCHER KNIFE.

EXECUTIVE INVESTORS AND THE STOCKHOLDERS' FAMILIES HAVE BEEN INVITED TO PREVIEW THE MALL TODAY.
IF ANYTHING BAD HAPPENS, THEY COULD CANCEL THEIR FINANCIAL BACKING!
Grand Opening Preview Tour
YOU HAVE TO HELP ME!!
I don't want to lose my job!
Okay, okay!
COOL IT, MISTER.
YOU'RE LUCKY YOU'VE GOT THE FULL CAST OF TYERS HERE TODAY.
THEY'RE GUESSING THAT IT'S THE KILLER'S GHOST.
EVERYONE'S AT THEIR WIT'S END...
...AND SOME OF THE STAFF ARE THREATENING TO QUIT.

WHETHER IT'S AN EVIL SPIRIT OR A HOMICIDAL MANIAC...
...WE'LL TAKE CARE OF IT!
QUIT TREATING ME LIKE A KID!
Shoo! Shoo!
LITTLE CHILDREN BELONG AT HOME.
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, STANDING WITH THE REST OF US?
OKAY NOW...
VERY IMPRESSIVE POSING, YOU GUYS. BUT...

...IN A MALL THIS HUGE...
...TRACKING DOWN THE SPIRIT WON'T BE EASY.
YOU'RE RIGHT...
ACK!!
WHOA! WHAT'S THE MATTER, CHIKO!?
HIDE
DID YOU SEE SOMETHING!?
WAS IT THE KILLER'S GHOST!?
.....
NO, EVEN WORSE...

HELLO.
IT'S YOU...
HUH...?

WHO IS THAT!?
?
THANK YOU FOR THE OTHER DAY...

DAUGHTER!?
I'M SORRY ...
...THAT MY DAUGHTER'S BEING SUCH A PAIN.

DAUGHTER!?
DOESN'T THAT MEAN ...?
THAT'S YOUR POP, CHIKO!?
WHAT'S HE DOING HERE!?
WHSPR
WHSPR
THAT'S WHAT I WANNA KNOW!!
I'M HERE ON BUSINESS.
MY COMPANY INVESTED A LOT IN THIS MALL...
HUH? HE THE PRESIDENT OF THE COMPANY OR SOMETHING!?
YOU NEVER SAID YOU WERE RICH!!
WITH SUCH A WEALTHY FATHER ...
...I'M AMAZED YOU'RE SUCH A MONEY-GRUBBER.
HEY, SHUT UP!!
FOR YOUR INFORMATION!
I NEVER WANTED ANYTHING TO DO WITH HIS MONEY!

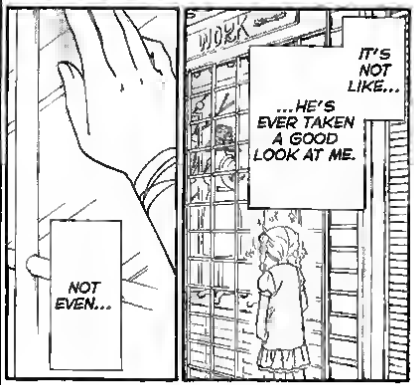
CHILDREN SHOULD BE SEEN...
...NOT HEARD.
TURN

WITH NO COMMON SENSE OR EXPERIENCE...
...THEY'RE ALWAYS SHOOTING OFF THEIR MOUTHS.
I AGREE
HUH!?
YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT?
HE DIDN'T EVEN RECOGNIZE HIS OWN DAUGHTER?
You've shrunk, but...
.....
THAT'S WHY I TOLD YOU...
...HE DOESN'T CARE...
...AN OUNCE ABOUT ME!

CHIKO ...?
MY DAUGHTER CAME WITH YOU?
Uuuh, you see...
.....
AH!
WAIT, CHIKO!!
DASH
AKEO-SAN!
WHAT DID YOU TELL THIS GUY!?
I never heard anything about this!
WHAT ELSE?
I don't believe this guy...
BUT WE KIDNAPPED HER!!
Don't keep us in the dark!
I SAID WE'RE TAKING CARE OF HIS DAUGHTER.

...WHEN I WAS THIS LITTLE.

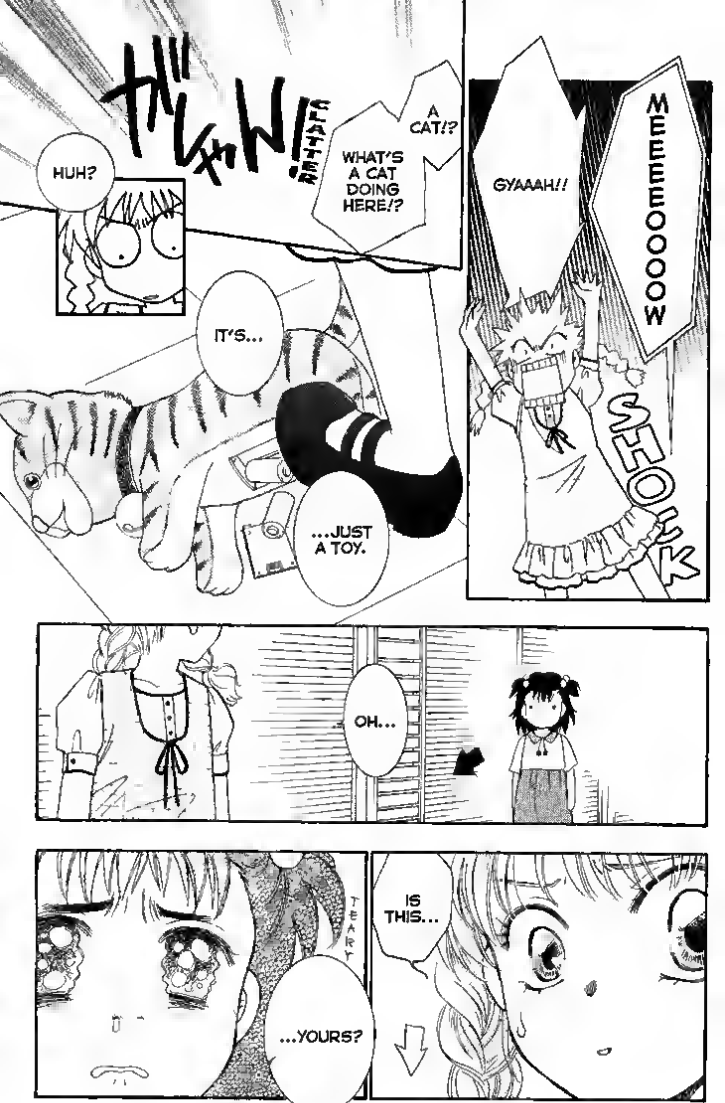
I KNEW HE'D BE LIKE THAT.
I NEVER EXPECTED HIM TO SMILE AT ME LIKE A LOVING FATHER.


NOT EVEN...
WORK
IT'S NOT LIKE...
...HE'S EVER TAKEN A GOOD LOOK AT ME.

THE FIGHTS ALWAYS ENDED WITH A NEW BRUISE.
ALL HE DID WAS WORK. AND AT HOME...
...HE FOUGHT WITH MY MOM OVER NOTHING.
STOP IT!
DON'T HURT MOMMY!
SMACK
WHO DO YOU HAVE TO THANK FOR THE FOOD ON THE TABLE, HUH!?
YOU DON'T SUPPORT THIS FAMILY! SO SHUT YOUR MOUTH!!

...I KEPT QUIET.
AND SO...
I STAYED OUT OF IT.
ALL I DID WAS WATCH.
IN SILENCE.

I HATE REMEMBERING THE PAST!!
Uuuurgh!
Gasp!
Waaagh!
I'M NOT THAT KIND OF GIRL ANYMORE!!
That's right!
THINGS ARE DIFFERENT NOW!
WHERE WAS I...?
NOW.
'CAUSE I DON'T RECOGNIZE THIS PLACE AT ALL.
LET ME SEE...
FLOOR MAP
We came in through the central entrance.
And then took a left onto the overpass in the B Wing...
THIS PLACE IS A MAZE!!
SOMEBODY SUE THE DESIGNER!!
Waaah!
None of these shops are even open yet!!


HUH?
CLATTER
A CAT!?
WHAT'S A CAT DOING HERE!?
IT'S...
...JUST A TOY.
GYAAAH!!
MEEEEOOOOW
SHOCK
OH...
TEARY
...YOURS?
IS THIS...

THAT ANSWERS MY QUESTION.
Thought so...
WAAAAH!!!
POP
THERE.
NOW IT SHOULD WORK AGAIN.
It's batteries just came out.
ARE YOU HERE ON THE TOUR?
WHERE'S YOUR MOMMY AND DADDY?
.....

I HATE ...
...MY DADDY.
ARE YOU LOST?
.....
I just got lost, myself.
!
WHEN DADDY'S MAD...
...HE HITS ME.
HE'S SCARY.
WHEN WAKANA BROUGHT HOME A KITTY...
...HE GOT REALLY MAD.
THE POOR KITTY LOOKED SO LONELY.
YOU KNOW, THE SAME THING HAPPENED TO ME!
I REALLY GOT IT WHEN I BROUGHT HOME A PUPPY.
YOU HATE YOUR DADDY, TOO?
ARE YOU KIDDING ME?
I HATE HIS GUTS! ESPECIALLY NOW!

YAY! THEN WE'RE THE SAME!

IT'S NOT SOMETHING I'D CELEBRATE, BUT OKAY...
RIGHT...
Yaaay! You fixed him!
MEOW

CHILL

JUST NOW...
...I COULD'VE SWORN I SAW SOMEBODY.
THE NIGHT GUARDS CLAIMED THEY SAW THE SHADOW OF A TALL MAN.
CHILL
TURN
FREEZE
CLIK
CLIK
CLIK
CLIK
I HEAR FOOT-STEPS ...
CLIK
CLIK
SUZUTEN
...COMING CLOSER!
CLIK
THIS COULD BE BAD.
I CAN'T EVEN USE SHIROGANE!

THIS IS NO TIME TO BE LOST!
KAZY
Ah!
THAT DOES IT!
WE HAVE TO GET AWAY!!
TMP
TMP
TMP
HE'S FOLLOWING US!!
!
I hate running!
WHERE ARE WE GOING?
UH... THAT'S A GOOD QUES-TION...

Ah, there she is.
CHIKO!?
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?
We were looking for you!
NOT GOOO!!
WITH OUR SHORT, LITTLE LEGS, HE'LL BE ON US IN NO TIME!!
Thank God!
TSUNA!
AYA-SAN!!
LOOM
...IS HERE!!
THE KILLER'S GHOST ...

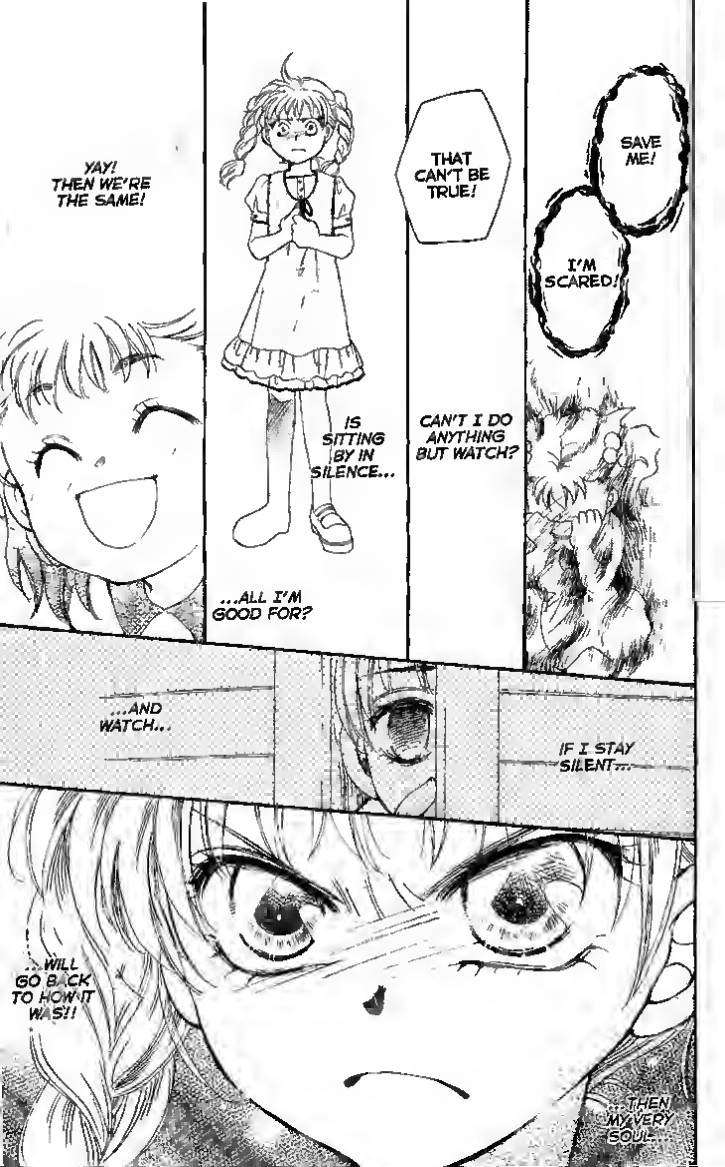
SWISH
NO...!
KOKURYU!
SWISH
AAA

HUH!?
...SOL-DIER?
CLUNK
IT'S A TOY...
Earlier...
I SAW IT OUTSIDE THE TOY STORE...
WATCH OUT! IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!!
DASH
GET AWAY, CHIYAKO!
BEHIND YOU!!
BEHIND ME?

PLAY WITH ME, BIG SISTER...
CHILL
!?
H...
HOW?
THE POLTERGEIST WASN'T THE KILLER.
IT WAS ONE OF THE CHILDREN HE KILLED.

YOU'RE ...
...JUST LIKE ME, SEE?
SHE'S TOO STRONG!
I CAN'T SHAKE HER OFF!
YOU HATE YOUR DADDY TOO, RIGHT?
!
FWOOSH
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
MASTER...
FWOOOOSH
AAAAAH!

SMOLDER
I'M SCARED!!
IT'S SO HOT!!
.....
GUYS ...
SHE WAS A VICTIM, RIGHT?
SHE DIDN'T DO ANY-THING WRONG.
WHY CAN'T WE-
ENOUGH.
FWIP
SHE'S CONSUMED BY HATE AND DOESN'T KNOW ANY BETTER.
IT'S A LOST CAUSE.
IT'S CASES LIKE THIS...
...THAT MAKE ME DISLIKE CHILDREN.


SAVE ME!
I'M SCARED!
THAT CAN'T BE TRUE!
YAY! THEN WE'RE THE SAME!
CAN'T I DO ANYTHING BUT WATCH?
IS SITTING BY IN SILENCE...
...ALL I'M GOOD FOR?
IF I STAY SILENT...
...AND WATCH...
...THEN MY VERY SOUL...
...WILL GO BACK TO HOW IT WAS!!

SHE SPUN SHIRO-GANE!?
SHE BROKE SEIRAN'S SEAL!
FLASH
SLICE
!?
CHIYA-KO...
...GANE?
SHIRO...

MODE
RUMMAGE
RUMMAGE
FLING
MODE
CRASH
Have some decency!
TIME OUT!
Tweeet!
Don't move!
CLIK
THAT'S MORE LIKE IT!
YOU SHOPLIFTER!
TRANSFOR-MATION COMPLETE!
TA DA!
Okay...
You better give that right back!
You really are a spoiled rich girl
You just had to rob the trendiest outfit

WAH ...
WAAAH ...
CROUCH
LET'S GET YOU HOME.
NOBODY'S GOING TO HURT YOU ANYMORE.
HERE.
HOLD ON TO THIS.
UNRAVEL
WHAT ABOUT ...
...MY KITTY ...?

SURE! YOU CAN TAKE YOUR KITTY WITH YOU!
GRIP
I'M SURE YOUR DADDY WILL UNDERSTAND.
FREEZE
?
WHAT'S THE MATTER ?
I'M SCARED ...
SO SCARED ...
I'M SCARED OF MY DADDY.

HUH?
I HATE HIM.
I HATE...
...MY DADDY.
THESE ARE...
...WAKANA-CHAN'S MEMORIES!
I TOOK MY KITTY HOME.
BUT HE BROKE HIM.
!?
AND ALL OF MY FRIENDS...
HE BROKE THEM, TOO.
!!

I HATE BEING SCARED.
I'LL MAKE IT ALL GO AWAY.
I HATE DADDY.
SHE'S THE ONE...
...WHO CAUSED THE FIRE!
FWOOSH
I HATE HIM!!
WAKANI-CHAN'S FATHER...
...WAS THE KILLER!!

NOOOO!!
NO...
I'M SCARED...
I'M SCARED...
CHIYAKO!?
SHE'S RESONATING WITH THE GIRL'S STRING OF FATE.
IT'S CONSUMING HER...
SO SCARED...
SLIP
WAFT

STOP IT...
TRMBL
TRMBL
DADDY ...!
HUG

I'LL...
IT'S OKAY.
...PROTECT YOU.
I'LL BE OKAY...
THAT'S RIGHT.

I'VE FELT THIS...
...SOMEWHERE BEFORE...
...WAIT.
GASP!

THAT'S ONE WAY TO SNAP BACK TO REALITY.
PAH!
This isn't funny!
WHOOOOA!!
SHUFFLE
THRDUMP
...SAY WHAT I...
...THINK HE DID!?
THRDUMP
DID HE JUST..!
THRDUMP
WHAT'S GOING ON!?
THRDUMP
HOLD ON.
THE GIRL!
WHERE'D WAKANA-CHAN GO!?
...PROTECT YOU!?
I'LL...
SPLURT

SHE'S GONE...
I BELIEVE SHE RAN AWAY.
SHIROGANE...
...WHOSE INITIALS ARE "CHIYAKO"!!
THANKS TO A CERTAIN SOME-BODY...
Ouch
I COULDN'T SAVE HER...
...BECAUSE I LET GO OF SHIROGANE.

AHHH!!
ZIP
ZIP
ZIP
WHAT'S THE MATTER !?
CHIYAKO!?
CHIKO!?
TWINGE
TWINGE
WHAT...
WHAT'S GOING ON!?

THIS HURTS TEN TIMES MORE...
...THAN MY USUAL REACTION!
COLLAPSE
YOUR BODY'S NOT SUITED TO HANDLE SHIROGANE IF YOU CONTINUE TO USE IT...
...YOU'LL CAUSE IRREVOCABLE DAMAGE TO YOURSELF!

The final member of the Five Colored Threads team showed up in the Sixth Binding chapter. I wanted her to play a classic Japanese instrument, so I decided to go with the koto. However, I've never actually heard it played in real life before, so I made a last-minute reservation at a recital of one. To kill some time during intermission, I loitered around the hotel where the performance hall was, and ended up using it for the setting in the story. I love how I never put any experience to waste.

The Seventh Binding chapter was one scary event after another. I feel I must apologize for that. I'd originally written the arc to take place over three chapters, and was going to feature them all together in the next volume...oh, well. Witnessing Chiko's family background, it really is only one fragment of the whole story. Please read the rest of the series to find out more.

Now, as for the covers, we've had Chiko and Tsuna so far...and if we keep up this theme of featuring one member of each of the Five Elements on the covers, that means this series should continue to at least five volumes. At least...I hope it works out that way. Everybody's support is a heavy factor in the realization of that dream, so please stick with me from here on in! I'm serious. And I'll be doing my best to solicit that support from you all with more interesting stories and action-packed fun!

One morning, at work...
I don't know if I'll actually be awake by the time I get home...
Where I have almost no time to be...
...I left a note for my assistant to find when she wakes.
Please wake me up at XX o'clock!
Oh, Maki-san left me a note.
It was while working on chapter seven...
Yaaaaaaa...
Wake me uuuup...
Wakaru-chan will jolt you awake!!
But
photocopied

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I'm waiting to hear your impressions!
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SPECIAL THANKS
TAKI TAKI MIU CHAN DOKUMI HITAN MITSUKO
RIU KAMINA MARU K.SAITOH CHITAKA
MY FAMILY and YOU!

FOUR GUARDIANS OF THE NIGHT SKY

You may have noticed strange symbols on the back covers and chapter breaks of *Bound Beauty*. There's even one tattooed on the body of Tsuna on the first cover! And yet these symbols have yet to be mentioned in the course of the story. What are they – and why are they there?

They come from the Chinese legend of the *Four Guardians of the Night Sky*. According to ancient Chinese astronomy, the fantastic beasts depicted in the symbols reside in four quadrants of the sky: North, South, East and West. Each quadrant represents an element, a season, and is associated with an animal deity that serves as its guardian. These animal deities are the red bird (*suzaku*), the blue dragon (*seiryu*), the black tortoise (*genbu*), and the white tiger (*byakko*).

You may have noticed that the symbol tattooed on Tsuna's body doesn't match any of the beasts mentioned above. (It looks like a cross between a horse and a demon – but what is it really?) We'll explain his symbol in a moment, but first take a look at the chart below, which outlines the relationship between each symbol and the characters in the story to whom they have been visually (if not verbally) connected.

Character	Color	Element	Animal	Position	Season
Aya	Black	Water	Tortoise	North	Winter
Akeo	Red	Fire	Bird	South	Summer
Isora	Blue	Wind	Dragon	East	Spring
Chiyako	White	Metal	Tiger	West	Fall
Hirotsuna	Yellow	Earth	Kirin	Center	N/A

Hirotsuna is the "odd man out" as he is the fifth member of four-symbol legend. However, there is another legend deeply entwined into the fabric of *Bound Beauty* – that of the *Five Elements* that are used in connection with the Colored Threads, one of which each Tyer in the story represents. It is by combining the *Five Elements* with the *Four Guardians* that we create a place for the Earth element that Tsuna wields – as the "center point" of the combined legends. (A rather honorary position for a scamp like Tsuna!) His corresponding animal is the "kirin", the Eastern equivalent to the Western unicorn, only with a draconic flair.

Whether or not the symbols of these mythological beasts will play into the plot has yet to be seen, but at the very least, it would be nice to see all the male characters stripped down to the waist, sporting full-body tattooes down their backs! (Well, one can hope..!)

RAWR
Why won't you release the next chapter?!
Can I help you?
What can I do to help?
Fan Girl
It's not like YOU helped out any...
We don't have enough translators or editors
Cross-eyed attempt
Visit our website for details
Find us some translators and editors and you'll have your next chapter
http://www.aerandria.net

Aerandria

love the mystery

Shibariya Komachi Volume 2 Chapter 4

Scanner: Lacaille **Proofreader: Jenn Fang**

Translator: Deama **Editor: Nixie**

Quality Control: Lacaille

Our last release for this series. Many thanks to all the staffers who worked with me on this. Thank you!

For everyone else, please buy the licensed English version once it becomes available in your country!

~Lacaille

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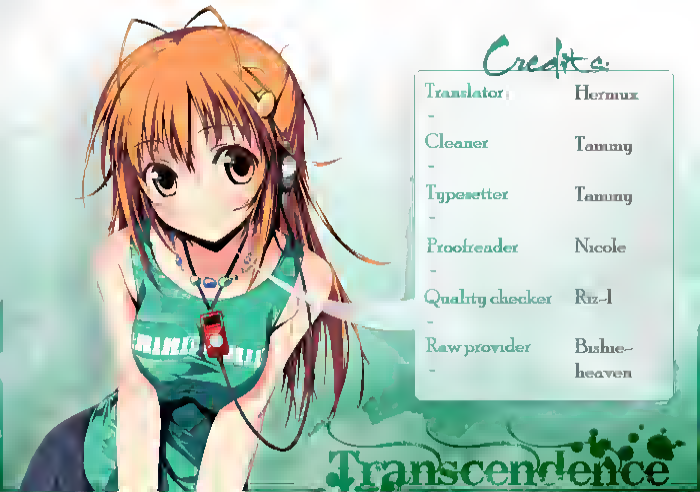
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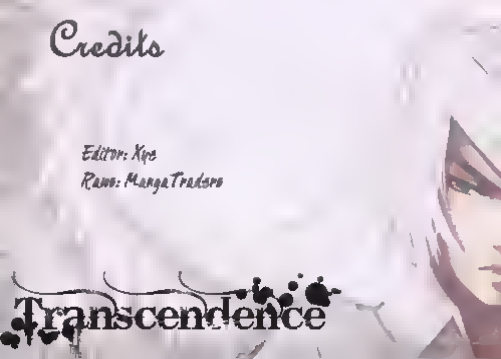

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?!
Why are you covered in blood?
PANT
PANT
DID I MAKE IT?
WELL, I HEARD TRANSCENDENCE IS RECRUITING SO I CAME AS FAST AS POSSIBLE
I though the positions might be taken soon
AS FOR THE BLOOD... I TRIPPED...
A couple of times
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TO apply
But, that's not important.
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